

Hitches Lane, Fleet, Hants GU51 5JA  
t: 01252 613483  
e: [Headteacher.pa@cps.hants.sch.uk](mailto:Headteacher.pa@cps.hants.sch.uk)  
w: [www.cps.hants.sch.uk](http://www.cps.hants.sch.uk)

Headteacher: Mr K John



learners who aspire for themselves and inspire others

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Dear Parents and Carers,

Many of you will remember that we have written to you previously to highlight the dangers that vaping poses to our young people. Unfortunately, one of our students became seriously ill this week having used a vape containing an unknown substance and they required emergency hospital treatment. We have been investigating this very concerning incident as a result.

At Calthorpe Park School, we have significant sanctions in place for any vapes found in school. Our Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy makes it clear that using or being in possession of a vape or being with a group vaping or in possession of a vape, will lead to a suspension. Please be aware that any vapes found to have illegal substances such as THC added, could lead to permanent exclusion. This week we have imposed some significant sanctions on a small minority of our students who had used vapes, were in the company of those vaping or in possession of vapes. We will continue to apply our rules rigorously.

It is illegal for anybody under the age of 18 to purchase a vape or for any adult to purchase a vape on behalf of anybody under the age of 18. Similarly, any establishment in our locality that sells vapes to individuals under the age of 18 are committing a criminal offence. Some of the vapes and vape liquid sold in shops and online are legal and some are illegal, and the difficulty is being able to observe and know the difference between the two. We work with the Police and the local council to share information relating to the supply and origin of vapes/vape liquid where we become aware these are being sold to children.

Synthetic illegal substances, sometimes known as 'spice', can often be odourless and very difficult to detect due to the nature of chemicals used. They can also appear to be quite innocently named. It seems to continue to be a fad or fashion for young people to experiment with vaping, particularly at parties and whilst in park areas with their friends.

One of the problems with vaping is that young people sharing a 'vape' often have no idea what they are inhaling, which is potentially very dangerous. To vape from someone's pen is extremely dangerous – one simply does not know the safety of what is being vaped, and it is therefore extremely risky. The risks are heightened as some of these substances can cause extreme behaviours and reactions; the national press covers sad stories on a regular basis of young people being seriously affected by such substance misuse.

It may be helpful for parents to know that we are told vape pens, liquids, oils and other such paraphernalia can be legally purchased online and can also be purchased via Amazon, Ebay and other online platforms. We encourage you to monitor your child's online purchases closely as these accounts are often set as 'private' and can be hidden. If you see a change in your child's behaviour, sleep or eating patterns we would advise you to speak to your child about your concerns and to search their room for any vape pens, liquids, oils and other such paraphernalia. It is worth noting that these items can be difficult to identify and often look like highlighter pens or other stationery.

We all recognise the importance of educating our students when dealing with drug-related issues and constantly adapt and review our curriculum and assembly plan as well as working with external agencies to keep abreast of changes and issues. We have delivered assemblies, used our form time activities and PSHE lessons to raise awareness with our students of the dangers involved.



Hampshire  
County Council

Please encourage your child to speak to a trusted adult at school if they have any worries or concerns. If you have any information you wish to share with us directly please email [safeguarding@cps.hants.sch.uk](mailto:safeguarding@cps.hants.sch.uk) Below are some external services which may be of use if you are concerned about your child:

**Talk to Frank** is an educational site for young people and their families with lots of help and advice on all topics related to illegal substances. Their website is user-friendly with advice and education to help and support. Telephone 0300 123 66 00 or visit their website: [www.talktofrank.com](http://www.talktofrank.com)

**DrugWise** offers information on drugs, alcohol and tobacco and have an A-Z of drugs explaining what they are and how they are used: <https://www.drugwise.org.uk/>

**The Mix** provides information and support for the under 25s covering a range of topics. You can use their helpline or webchat from 11am-11pm daily or go to [www.themix.org.uk](http://www.themix.org.uk)

We are committed to working with parents and carers to ensure that our young people are making informed and safe decisions.

Yours sincerely,

Kevan John

Headteacher